

when it comes to dating or doing whatever college students do other than being football players and students, very, very difficult especially if you come from a poor community, a poor neighborhood, a poor family, and that was the beginning of my concern because with all the hype concerning this bill, that one thing remained and that is if our football players are financially insecure, well, I guess that goes for other athletes as well, there will always be difficulties with them as athletes. There will always be temptations. Whether they yield to them or not, I guess that is up to them.

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR WIITALA: But I also found out in the process that because of Senator Chambers, in Nebraska and across the nation there have been improvements. Little did I know the University of Nebraska had gone to the NCAA four times petitioning for an allowance of \$25 to \$50 a month. The trouble is the NCAA is made up of small colleges and not every college, especially the small colleges, could afford to pay \$50 allowance a month, let alone 25, and that is why it is continuously voted down. And I also learned that there was a special athletic fund with \$78,800 of private donations to take care of athletes with permanent disabilities. That is nothing. It is a pittance but at least the University is starting to recognize the problem and now the NCAA is considering adopting an insurance package that will have \$1,000 monthly benefit for someone who is permanently disabled for ten years for a lump sum total of \$120,000. Excuse me, that is the University's coverage. The NCAA is recommending total disability payments for life up to \$750,000. They as far as I know haven't enacted it yet. And so in conclusion I would like to say that Senator Chambers has introduced a very important issue for us to concern but he has wrapped it up in a package which is almost anathema and it speaks to an issue that is almost taboo and that is a criticism of the University, and its football team and its football program. Just lastly if I may, Mr. Speaker, I hope all of you had a chance to take a look at the other handout that I handed out that Nebraska in the Big Eight is the leading University when it comes to the academic all Big Eight. In fact out of the last ten years it has led the Big Eight with the exception of one year when it took second place, and nationally, Academic All-American selections, Nebraska ranks highest in the nation when it comes to the NCAA. I think that our University program is remarkable but it is not perfectly polished. There are problems and there are bound to be problems and we need to expect it but we also need to be diligent, and if LB 211 did anything, it made us more diligent. Thank you, Mr. President.